



Health co-benefits and risks of public health adaptation strategies to climate change: A review of current literature

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Abstract:

OBJECTIVES: Many public health adaptation strategies have been identified in response to climate change. This report reviews current literature on health co-benefits and risks of these strategies to gain a better understanding of how they may affect health. **METHODS:** A literature review was conducted electronically using English language literature from January 2000 to March 2012. Of 812 articles identified, 22 peer-reviewed articles that directly addressed health co-benefits or risks of adaptation were included in the review. **RESULTS:** The co-benefits and risks identified in the literature most commonly relate to improvements in health associated with adaptation actions that affect social capital and urban design. Health co-benefits of improvements in social capital have positive influences on mental health, independently of other determinants. Risks included reinforcing existing misconceptions regarding health. Health co-benefits of urban design strategies included reduced obesity, cardiovascular disease and improved mental health through increased physical activity, cooling spaces (e.g., shaded areas), and social connectivity. Risks included pollen allergies with increased urban green space, and adverse health effects from heat events through the use of air conditioning. **CONCLUSIONS:** Due to the current limited understanding of the full impacts of the wide range of existing climate change adaptation strategies, further research should focus on both unintended positive and negative consequences of public health adaptation.

Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3607711>

Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified